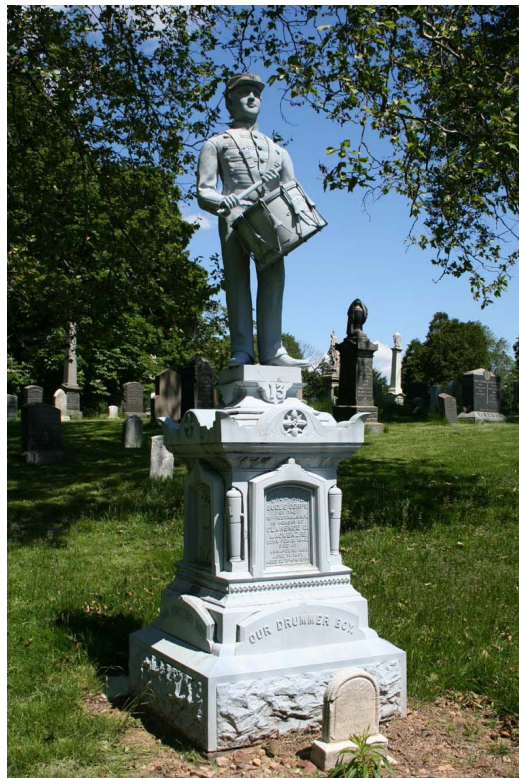


Drummer Boys of the American Civil War

Union Influences That Made Children Go To War



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Ernest Vogt (attributed to). "Side Drum." c. 1860. Wood, various materials. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY.

Prelude

The boys were well-rested and in good spirits. Two days earlier they had traveled hundreds of miles from New York to Virginia, now music filled the air, as it did in every encampment. The men drilled to the beat of the snare drums that disciplined boys, as young as ten, played. Music seemed to always be heard in camp. The presence of children uplifted the morale of the troops, many of whom were only a few years older than the youthful drummers, others were old enough to be their great-grandfathers. The psychological effect created an unnatural jubilation in the face of war.¹ There was a camaraderie that felt more like an outing with friends than a bivouac. This day, the mood was exceptionally high, the troops were enjoying their first ‘victory’ since mustering.

The night before, the Confederate song “Dixie’s Land” had been heard from afar. The youngsters ran and grabbed their drums and signaled the regimental band to join them for the campaign, the battle of the bands had begun. The Union fired back from their bugle, drum and fifes with “When Johnny Comes Marching Home.” The engagement lasted late into the night, as the two bands attempted to one-up each other. The Union finally declared victory, fully aware that the Southerners were doing the same. However, the celebratory mood ended with the sound of gunfire.²

Almost at once the men lined up to do what they had been trained to do, and for the first time, thirteen year old Horace saw a man get shot. As he paused in shock, he reminded himself

¹ Raoul F. Camus, *Military Music of the American Revolution*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1976), 3.

² The story of Union and Confederate rivalries is corroborated in Kenneth E. Olson’s book *Music and Musket*, in the chapter titled “Bands at the Front.”

of his duty and stood up straight and beat his drum to the sound of the Yankee cheer in effort to gain sound superiority over the Rebel yell. Horace and his friend Johnny, who was fifteen, stayed close to their captain. They waited for orders to signal the troops to either keep moving forward or to retreat, they both knew their regiment would never do the latter. It was only minutes into the battle, though it seemed like it had been going all day when they received their first orders. "Boys, get the wounded out of there!" the captain ordered before moving forward with the attacking line. The two dropped their drums and joined other regimental musicians working as stretcher bearers taking the injured to the dressing stations. If they were not removed, chances were they would die. As Horace helped another musician carry a soldier that could not have been a day over seventeen, he saw Johnny do the unthinkable. Seeing that the soldier he was about to move was already dead, he grabbed the expired man's musket and joined the fight himself.

Horace continued moving as many men as he could, the ones he came to alone and could not move, he offered water and a kind word of reassurance. Then, as quickly as it began, the Rebels had retreated. As Horace's adrenaline subsided, he looked around, witnessing a scene of horror. Across the ramparts built the day before, blue and gray uniforms dotted the smoke filled landscape. More people lay dead in front of Horace than all of the people in his town of Cold Spring, NY, where his father worked at the West Point Foundry casting cannon barrels.

This is a fictional account that shows the vital roles children played and the duty they maintained in the American Civil War. They cued the soldier's movements on and off the battlefield, acted as nurses, stretcher bearers, provided water for the wounded, and kept an upbeat

spirit in camp that allowed the men to forget the horrors of war. However, both the use of children and drums pre-dates this conflict and are rooted in European practice rather than American tradition.

Drums have long been used in militaries. The ancient Greeks generated patriotism and kept structure in the marching troops with music.³ Through the centuries, armies increased in size and later gunpowder made the battlefield too loud for oral commands. Simultaneously, tactical developments in warfare had soldiers moving in blocks, as a team, rather than independently moving without order. It is unknown for which it was used first, to give commands or keep the cadences, but it was a natural choice for both because the sound of a snare carries long distances. The drum was quickly adopted for the infantry while the trumpet was used for mounted soldiers.⁴

It is widely believed that up until the late 18th Century drummers were adult males.⁵ It was a position given as an honor in a company and came with an increase in pay. In 1768, Bennett Cuthbertson first recommended the enlistment of boys below the age of fourteen.⁶ This was not due to manpower, but to the fact that greater proficiency in drumming was needed. Children could be developed into fine drummers, possessing greater flexibility and time to master the required rudiments.⁷ Cuthbertson also added that they should be trained as soldiers in order to become non-commissioned officers as adults. He stated that the youth “...being bred in

³ Camus, *Military Music*, 3

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid, 8.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

the Regiment from their infancy, have a natural affection and attachment to it, and are seldom induced to desert, having no other place to take shelter at.”⁸

A century later in the American Civil War, drummers were greatly utilized. In fact, there were ten bands on the field at Gettysburg.⁹ Kenneth E. Olson states that, “although few bands influenced the course of battle, their presence on the field was of sufficient importance to be recorded by the combatants of both armies.”¹⁰ Some of these boys were as young as ten years old, an appalling and absurd notion by today’s standards.¹¹ Lore and scholarly literature alike have examined the roles these brave boys played, but one question is still left unanswered, what propelled them to go?

⁸ Camus, *Military Music*, 9. Quoting Cuthberston in: *A Sysytem for the Complete Interior Management and Oeconomy of a Battalian Infantry* (Dublin: Boulter Grierson, 1768), 14-16.

⁹ Kenneth E. Olson, *Music and Musket: Bands and Bandsmen of the American Civil War*, (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1981), 200.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ It should be noted that even today, kids can still be found fighting in mercenary armies around the world.

Introduction

Why a child would join the army and go to war as a drummer is something of a puzzle. However, innumerable teens and pre-teens did leave their innocence behind to risk their lives for both the Union and the Confederate Armies. We have many books solely dedicated to these young men: they are also often discussed in general books concerning the American Civil War. Yet the factors that combined to influence the boys' decisions to join have not been fully examined. In fact, at the time of this writing over 60,000 books on the war have been published (more than the amount of days that have passed since shots were fired upon Fort Sumpter on April 12, 1861) and this issue is largely untouched.¹²

The question of why a boy went to war needs to be answered. It will deepen our understanding of people's psyche concerning war in the 1860s and the outside forces that shaped their mindset. The children in the Civil War were on the battlefield and in the line of fire. They were non-combatant roles that did not move forward with the line, but during the chaos of fighting some were killed. Though the number of casualties is negligible in comparison to the overall war, these were children as young as nine years old, who in present day society are considered to have no place in such a dangerous environment.¹³

According to the sources, four distinct factors influenced these boys to go to war: others who were these children's role models, the adoration that the media showed for the drummers, a need from the army for music, and the career path that some could follow when they grew up. This thesis does not attempt to analyze the representations within these instances, for that would

¹² Eric Foner, "U.S. in the Era of the Civil War and Reconstruction," (lecture, Columbia University class, New York, NY, January 27, 2014).

¹³ John Clem is believed to be the youngest, joining just 3 months before his tenth birthday.

entail challenging large bodies of scholarship. Here, the focus is only on representations that would have been attractive to the boys and might have played a role in their decisions to enlist. The evidence comes mainly from newspaper articles and magazines from the era, diaries, archival research at the New York Historical Society, as well as records from Brooklyn's Greenwood Cemetery and e-mails exchanged with the cemetery's resident historian. The stories presented in this thesis were carefully chosen because they each convey different circumstances that played a role in the drummer boys' decision to enlist in the military.

This work began with a prelude that is a fictional narrative which contained information about the drummer on the battlefield- their duties and roles in the regiment. The information is corroborated by secondary literature collected by numerous scholars and is easily found in Civil War texts, the story itself is fiction. Nevertheless, the information it contains is not just about the roles these drummers played but also about how they are depicted, which helps us understand the attraction the war might have held for boys who enlisted. My study looks to other sources from the period itself, seeking to show more specifically the kinds of circulated images and stories that helped persuade these drummers, most of them still children, to join up – and even convinced their parents to let them go.

In the first chapter, "Family and Friends," I use diaries and newspapers to show that these young men were influenced by their relatives and peers to join the army. There were reasons of family hardships, jealousy because siblings and friends were of age to fight, as well as the glory that accompanied the duty of serving the country. Here that I show that the personal contact with others involved in the war inspired the boys to join.

The second chapter, entitled “Media,” demonstrates how newspapers and magazines further glamorized the drummers, making them heroes for both the young readers and parents. I cite mostly Union newspapers, as this study focuses on the Union Army.¹⁴ These have provided me with correspondences from soldiers reporting their experiences in battle. There are occasional mentions in the Southern newspapers and stories originating in the Union did reach Confederate children. For example, the December 9, 1865 *Charleston Daily News* reviewed for the children’s book *The Irvington Stories* by M. Dodge. The southern reviewer praised the author for her work, with one exception, the story of the “The Drummer Boy.” According to the review, after having a group of children read the book, the ‘little critics’ stated, “that is a pretty story, but I don’t like it because it has so much about the ‘rebels.’”¹⁵ The reviewer seconded the comment saying, “it is not in human nature, nor in common sense, to expect that our children should take pleasure in reading stories in which their fathers are abused and often belied”¹⁶ Stories of drummers were interesting to both Union and Confederate youth, but the political aspect was the irritant. With that aspect removed, both sides could equally be seen as loving the adventures of the brave boys who went to war.

The third chapter, “The Government Recruitment Effort,” is concerned with the direct attempts made by the Army, as well as the state and national governments, to enlist drummers. The available evidence is slim, but Civil War recruitment posters, for example, reveal how the Government tried to enlist drummers and at the same time expose their importance to the armies.

¹⁴ The Confederate press does not seem to feature many accounts about drummers, even though both sides utilized them. On May 30, 1915 an article in the Washington Post was titled “*Boys were the Backbones of both Armies in the Civil War.*”

¹⁵ “Book Notices.” *Charleston Daily News*. December 9, 1865. <http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84026994/1865-12-09/ed-1/seq-2/>.

¹⁶ “Book Notices.” *Charleston Daily News*.

I also include materials that show the viewpoint held by some regarding the inclusion of military training in the curriculum of the public school system.

The fourth and final chapter, “The Military Career,” examines boys who became lifelong servicemen. Diaries, news articles, and genealogical records show why a boy would remain in the Army. Records at Brooklyn’s Green-Wood Cemetery reveal the lives of drummers after turning eighteen. Green-Wood is significant because there has been extensive research done on the Civil War Veterans that are interred there. From 2002 to 2011, Green-Wood historian Jeff Richman led the cemetery’s Civil War Project, which documented and compiled biographies of the Civil War veterans buried there. Upon the conclusion of the Project, this totaled over 4,500 Civil War veterans, including 18 generals; over 2,000 new gravestones were placed on previously un-marked graves.¹⁷ The first casualty of Brooklyn is memorialized at the cemetery by a zinc statue (seen on the title page); Clarence D. Mackenzie was a twelve-year-old drummer boy accidentally shot a stray bullet.¹⁸ Some of these boys joined solely because they were underage and only after turning 18 did they become drum majors, officers, and infantry.

¹⁷“Civil War Sequicentennial,” Green-Wood.com, last updated June 1, 2011, <http://www.green-wood.com/2010/civil-war-sesquicentennial/>.

¹⁸“ ‘Our Drummer Boy’ Clarence D. Mackenzie (1849-1861),” Green-Wood.com. *n.d.*, <http://www.green-wood.com/2010/our-drummer-boy-clarence-d-mackenzie/>.

Chapter I - Family & Friends

“ ‘Captain, if he is not killed-’ here her maternal feelings overcame her utterances, and she bent down over her boy and kissed him upon he forehead. As she arose, she observed, ‘Captain, you will bring him back with you, won’t you?’ ‘Yes, yes,’ He replied, ‘we will be certain to bring him back with us . . .’ ”¹⁹

There is no single motivation as to why any child would go to war as a drummer boy, but one of the biggest reasons came from family and friends. A boy might have been dismayed to see his father, older brother, or close friend go while he stayed at home with his mother; enlistment showed courage. Without the option of entering the infantry as a private, being a drummer was an alternative. There were boys that learned how to play for this reason, others were already proficient musicians, while some youngsters were actually pressured by their parents for financial reasons.

The New York Times headlined on January 15, 1862 “Little Eddie, The Drummer: A Reminiscence of Wilson’s Creek.” It was the account of a boy whose enlistment was urged by his mother due to financial hardship. Told by an unnamed corporal, it begins only days before the Battle of Wilson’s Creek in southwest Missouri. An African-American man announcing that he knew of a drummer who wished to enlist approached a Northern regiment.²⁰ The captain responded that the drummer must be on the grounds early the next morning. During *réveille* the next morning, before the officer’s quarters stood “a good-looking, middle-aged woman, dressed in deep mourning, leading by the hand a sharp, sprightly-looking boy, apparently about 12 or 13

¹⁹ “Little Eddie, The Drummer: A Reminiscence of Wilson’s Creek,” *New York Times*, Jan. 15, 1862. <http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/docview/91693627/14210F0BBB3317CAC2D/6?accountid=10226>.

²⁰ The story neither states nor insinuates whether the nameless African-American man was a slave or free-man, only that he was the one to approach the regiment on behalf of Eddie and his mother.

years of age.”²¹ Rebels had killed her husband, her property in Tennessee had been destroyed, and she and her child were left penniless. She had failed to find her sister in St. Louis. She wanted her son, Edward Lee, to become a drummer while she also looked for employment. Quickly he impressed the regiment, as well as the fifer. Led by Brigadier General Nathaniel Lyons, Eddie became popular among the men and often rode on the back of the long-legged fifer in muddy areas or shallow creeks on a 100-mile journey to Springfield.²²

Regrettably, the battle of Wilson’s Creek had an unhappy ending, Brigadier General Lyons was killed and Eddie’s feet were both blown off by cannon fire. A wounded Confederate soldier tied up the boy’s legs to stop the bleeding and added words of encouragement. Eddie was taken prisoner but died before reaching camp. Apparently, the drummer boy was loved, respected, and treated well by both sides before his tragic death. Though Eddie was a prisoner, humane efforts were made to save his life. It is doubtful that a wounded adult would have been treated with the same sincerity and likely would have been left for dead.

Edward Lee joined the Union forces because of a desperate family situation, more commonly, a boy would enlist of his own free will. For example, *With Sherman to the Sea*, recounts the experiences of Corydon “Cord” Edward Foote. Cord first thought of joining when he was 11 years old, standing in front of the courthouse during the announcement of President Lincoln’s call for volunteers. The men cheered, the band played, and everyone in attendance was “possessed by patriotism.”²³ Cord saw his older brother volunteer. Later, after a friend enlisted

²¹ “Little Eddie, The Drummer: A Reminiscence of Wilson’s Creek,” *New York Times*.

²² The story says they began in Rolla, MO. According to google maps, Rolla is 110 miles from Springfield, MO on today’s Interstate 44.

²³ Corydon Edward Foote, *With Sherman to the Sea; A Drummer’s Story of the Civil War*, New York: John Day Co., 1960, 20.

as a drummer boy, Cord approached a local drum major, “Pop” Lacey, who agreed to teach Cord the drumming rudiments. But he needed his parent’s consent to enlist. By chance, his mother was out of town the night of a town parade. Knowing his father would be at the parade, Cord took the opportunity to show his skills. Impressed, his father told the Colonel of the Michigan Tenth, “he’s that set on it he’ll go anyway, I guess, but his mother and I will feel better to have it as regular as possible.”²⁴ The day after his thirteenth birthday, Cord receiving his oversized uniform.²⁵ His mother requested a photograph with his drum before he left (*inset right*). After serving his three years with the Army, he lived to the age of 95.²⁶



Though parents obviously felt anguish when their young left for war, their patriotism often matched that of their boys. In *Music and Musket*, Kenneth E. Olson provides two examples cited from the *Washington Intelligencer*. One mother expressed, “I could not have felt he was my son had he hesitated.”²⁷ Another mother justified giving consent to an only child by analogizing him to Jesus Christ: “how can I refuse to give my

²⁴ Foote, *With Sherman to the Sea*, 26.

²⁵ Foote, *With Sherman to the Sea*, 26.

²⁶ Robert Elder, “Corydon E. Foote,” *Find a Grave*, last modified Apr 23, 2011, <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=68826826>.

²⁷ Olson, *Music and Musket*, 61.

son to the country when I remember that my Heavenly Father gave his only son to save the world.”²⁸

Military personnel also requested boys to enlist. Captain Louis Newcome writes in his 1929 memoir, “Lincoln’s Boy Spy,” that he had learned how to beat a snare at a young age from Patrick Gilmour, a famous composer and bandleader at the time.²⁹³⁰ He claims that “Colonel Webb himself” heard him play, introducing him to the notion of enlisting.³¹ The colonel persuaded fourteen year old Louis’ parents to let him enlist, purchased his uniform for him, and put him in charge of forming a drum corps for the regiment.³² Newcome reveals, “I shall never forget how proud I felt that bright morning, as we marched through the streets to entrain for Fortress Monroe, Virginia.”³³ Captain Newcome would soon find himself in a position other than drumming, covered in Chapter IV. His story can be seen as a mixture of family, knowing the right people, and chance. Learning to play drums from a famous bandleader undoubtedly exposed him to Colonel Webb, whose liking of the boy required permission from his parents to join his regiment- fortuitous recruitment.

²⁸ Olson, *Music and Musket*, 61.

²⁹ Captain Louis Newcome, *Lincoln’s Boy Spy*, (New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1929), 4.

³⁰ Patrick Gilmour’s legacy includes creating the antecedent of the “Boston Pops” as well as creating “Gilmore’s Concert Garden,” known today as “Madison Square Garden.

³¹ It does not specify if this is referring to Colonel Alexander S. Webb, who fought at Gettysburg among other major battles, or another Col. Webb. By stressing “himself” in this 1929 memoir, I infer that he is referencing to the famed Col. Alexander S. Webb.

³² Though musicians were paid as well as privates, uniforms and equipment had to be purchased and were not provided by the Government.

³³ Newcome, *Lincoln’s Boy Spy*, 4.

Though young boys ultimately made the decision to join the Army, these stories show how their admiration for others contributed to the choice. In 1768, Bennett Cuthbertson wrote that orphans or sons of soldiers are preferred for the position.³⁴ His wish was to engrain a loyalty to the regiment; following in a father's footsteps, a boy had an inherent role model and a natural blood allegiance along with his patriotic duty. Like Captain Newcome on the parade route, the pride a drummer felt would have been exhilarating, making any youngster resolute.



The grave stone of Charles Edwin King, who died at the age of thirteen in the Battle of Antietam. He is buried at Green Mount Cemetery in West Chester, PA.

³⁴ Camus, *Military Music*, 9.

Chapter II - Media

“And is it worth all this? For this is but one case among thousands. Yes, it *is* worth it, and the mother felt so, in all her grief and desolation, or rather she felt that ‘this is a time when we must not stop to count the cost; when we have nothing to do but go straight forward and leave every thing . . .’”³⁵

In 1870, approximately 80 percent of adults in the United States were literate.³⁶ Children and teens at the onset of the Civil War would have been reading more than any other previous generation. Some newspapers and magazines specifically targeted a younger audience. One observer states, “kids read magazines such as *Our Young Folks* that contained stories of soldiers like Johnny Clem and encouraged kids to sacrifice for the war effort.”³⁷ The *Youth’s Companion* was one such magazine, while *Harper’s New Monthly Magazine* targeted adults.³⁸ Likewise, stories in such newspapers as the *New York Times*, the *Chicago Tribune*, and the *Baltimore Sun* imprinted on youth the glory and moral obligation to defend a Northern cause.

The *Youth’s Companion* was published every Thursday. Since its 1827 inception, there had not been any overtly political messages in the articles. The majority of its essays dealt with religion, morals, animals, nature, and the arts. The magazine never mentioned war in the first eight months after the attack on Fort Sumpter, in mid-April of 1861. However, in December of that year, the opening article was about the personal struggle of a man who debated whether or

³⁵ “William Walker: A Story of War,” *Youth’s Companion*, 35.51, (December 19, 1861), 199-200. <http://ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/docview/127000119?accountid=10226>.

³⁶ “120 Years of Literacy,” *National Center for Educational Statistics*. accessed Nov. 19, 2013. https://nces.ed.gov/naal/lit_history.asp.

³⁷ “Kids in the Civil War,” *Pbs.org*, *n.d.*, <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/general-article/grant-kids/>.

³⁸ *Harper’s* popularity can be seen in its numbers, the initial press run was 7,500 copies in 1850, six months later circulation had reached 50,000. Data from: “About,” *Harper’s Magazine*, *n.d.*, <http://harpers.org/history/>.

not to enlist in the Army; he ultimately died in battle.³⁹ Historian Paul Ringel argues that the article was a turning point in editor Daniel Sharp Ford's management of the war. Ford used stories to "turn his audience's attention inward to the intensely personal and spiritual question of where an individual's primary responsibility lay during this time of crisis."⁴⁰ Together with the pride of following in a parent's or sibling's footsteps, ideas of glory, battle, and heroism were now being implanted into impressionable American youth.

Many stories glamorized the idea of youngsters in uniform. In 1864, *Youth's Companion* featured the story of a confederate boy who was asked to be a lookout in the event that a Yankee courier went a different way than they suspected. He accepted his duty, but another Southern boy, Will, gets to the courier first and warns the Yankee of the danger. Shortly after, Will received word that his father had died; thus he was the only surviving member of his family. The story ends when "he begged to stay with the army, and the regiment into whose hands he had fallen at first were too fond and proud of him to send him away. So he staid (*sic*) as a drummer-boy."⁴¹ The rebel son turned loyalist to the union expressed the opinion of the Boston magazine while also showing the honor of being a drummer boy. *The Youth's Companion* served the Union cause by making even the Southern boy a Federal musician.

The drummer was not always presented as heroic. Articles such as "Our Drummer Boy," published in the September 1864 issue of *Youth's Companion*, showed the sadness and loss of a

³⁹ "William Walker: A Story of War," *Youth's Companion*, 199-200.

⁴⁰ Paul B Ringle, "Thrills for Children: The Youth's Companion, The Civil War and the Commercialization of American Youth," in *Children and Youth During the Civil War Era*, ed. James Marten (New York: New York University Press, 2012), 78.

⁴¹ "The Little Hero," *Youth's Companion*, 37.46, (November 17, 1864), 181. <http://ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/docview/127008728?accountid=10226>.

young innocent life. However, death was not presented in the way that would dissuade a young boy. Even in the articles where the drummer died, he was an essential to the war effort.

Harper's New Monthly Magazine also honored drummers. In May of 1863, it featured a drawing of a lifeless youngster above a poem entitled "The Dead Drummer Boy" and a sketch of a mourning mother (*inset below*).⁴² The poem memorializes the lost drummer:



"No more his hand the fierce tattoo shall beat,
The shrill reveillé, or the long roll's call,
Or sound the charge, when in the smoke and heat
Of fiery onset foe with foe shall meet,
And gallant men shall fall..."⁴³

The poem concludes with the following stanza:

"But more than this what tongue shall tell his story?
Perhaps his boyish longings were for fame?
He lived, he died; and so, *memento mori*-
Enough if on the page of War and Glory
Some hand has writ his name."⁴⁴

Even the drummer who had joined only for personal glory rather than for patriotic support for the Union was a hero, and his mission was accomplished. About a year after this was printed, another drawing of a fallen drummer with two young maidens was featured above a short poem of remembrance called "The Drummer-Boys Burial (*inset next page*)."⁴⁵ The maidens that were

⁴² "The Dead Drummer Boy." *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*. 26.156, p430.
<http://web.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/ehost/detail?vid=4&sid=06b16572-cc47-463a-b2b3-1bc8d43f21e4%40sessionmgr114&hid=123&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWZWhvc3QtbGl2ZSZzY29wZT1zaXRl#db=h9k&AN=55498880>.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ "The Drummer-Boy's Burial." *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*. Volume 29, Issue 170, p146.
<http://web.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/ehost/detail?vid=6&sid=06b16572-cc47-463a-b2b3-1bc8d43f21e4%40sessionmgr114&hid=123&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWZWhvc3QtbGl2ZSZzY29wZT1zaXRl#db=h9k&AN=55498015>.

laying the lamented drummer boy to rest were the “. . . children of our foes.”⁴⁶ Once again, respect is shown for the drummer boy, even from the enemy. By honoring the deceased drummers in this way they are venerated as ‘war heroes,’ an appealing prospect for a young man.



Magazines were not the only source that commemorated the drummer boy; the daily papers also heralded the young men as heroes. Newspapers differed from magazines as they presented accounts of named drummer boys directly from battlefield correspondence. Throughout the war, all Northern newspapers contained such reports. Some were sad, such as the story of Little Eddie at Wilson’s Creek mentioned in Chapter One, while others told stories of bravery and steadfastness on the battlefield.⁴⁷ All proclaimed the boys as heroes.

“Old Point Correspondence: The Fourth of July at Old Point-Scence Among the Sick and Wounded-A Heroic Little Drummer-Boy. . .” declared the title of an account in *New York Times* of July 7, 1862:

“A little drummer boy, Edward Welch, the pet of his regiment, (Company C, Eighty-eighth New York,) was standing alone by the dead man and holding down the eyelids of his Captain, but betraying no more emotion than could be seen in the quivering of his young lips and his eyelashes wet with tears. There was something appalling in seeing a mere boy like this— he cannot be more than 11 years years old— taking an active

⁴⁶ “The Drummer-Boy’s Burial,” *Harpers*.

⁴⁷ “Little Eddie, The Drummer: A Reminiscence of Wilson’s Creek,” *New York Times*.

part in such terrible scenes, especially when I came to learn that he had just lost his father in the last battle. We were soon joined by several of the soldiers who came to take a last look at the Captain, and, as they did, sobbed aloud like children. To see these brave fellows, grim from the smoke of war, betraying such emotions, and to hear our little hero, with choking voice, say to one stalwart weeper: "Don't cry, Dan., it's no use crying," – was enough to melt a heart of stone."⁴⁸

The young drummer boy emerged as the hero of this story.

Another newspaper account celebrated Robert Henry Hendershot, the drummer of the 8th Michigan. When 100 men of the 7th Michigan received orders to cross the Rappahannock River and drive out the rebels so a bridge could be laid, thirteen year-old Henderson jumped into one of the boats begging to go, but the captain ordered him out, arguing that he would probably be shot. The boy responded that he was willing to die for his country. Seeing that the captain was not going to change his mind, Hendershot asked to push the boat off from shore. When he pushed the boat away, he held onto the backside and crossed the river. After landing, a shell broke his drum. He obtained a musket and went into the streets to fight.⁴⁹ "The Drummer Boy of the Rappahannock: THE HERO OF THE DRUM" proclaimed the April 18, 1863 *New-York Daily Tribune*. The *Nashville Union* reprinted his story when a ceremony was held in New York to honor him and give him a new drum.⁵⁰ "The Hero of the Rappahannock" had become a legend in the North and the South.

⁴⁸ "Old Point Correspondence: The Fourth of July at Old Point-Scence Among the Sick and Wounded- A Heroic Little Drummer-Boy- State of our Army Exodus of Civilians- Army Hangers-on The Anniversary at Norfolk," *New York Times*, July 7, 1862, <http://ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/docview/91651132?accountid=10226>.

⁴⁹ "The Drummer Boy of the Rappahannock: THE HERO OF THE DRUM." *New-York Daily Tribune*. April 18, 1863. <http://ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/docview/570665475?accountid=10226>.

⁵⁰ *The Nashville Daily Union*, March 15, 1863. <http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov>.

Magazines and newspapers glamorized the drummer boy, making it an appealing duty for a young man. Paired with the glory and family pride one could obtain, the allure was intensified by the news stories that made legends out of the boys. Printed in the North and South with little regard to reader's political opinion of the war, the drummer was either presented as a hero or an innocent fallen victim, both attracting youngsters to enlist.

Chapter III - The Government & Recruitment Effort

“WANTED, 500 ABLE BODIED MEN . . .”⁵¹

During the Civil War, President Lincoln issued twelve calls for Union soldiers, seeking a total of over 2.5 million men.⁵² A troop quota was issued to each state’s Governor, who would then announce the specific number of volunteers and regiments needed.⁵³ Conscription could be avoided if volunteers met the established quota. Those willing to offer their service would often receive generous ‘bounties,’ as well. Though drummers were never subject to the draft, this process provides important information concerning the recruitment efforts by the states. Recruiters themselves do not appear to have sought out musicians; James T. Ayers was a recruiter in 1864 for African American regiments in Tennessee, his diary makes no mention of musicians.⁵⁴ However, many records refer to their responsibilities and demonstrate the government’s recognition of their importance.

Posters and newspaper announcements sometimes included calls for musicians, including fifers, buglers and other bandsmen, but because of limited space musicians were not a priority. Drummer boys themselves were never directly called in these documents. However, each regiment had a budget for bandsmen, and in some instances there was a shortage filling these positions. The reasons for shortages are unknown but it can be inferred that most of the adult men

⁵¹ “U.S. Marine Corps. Recruitment Poster,” n.d., Poster File, Civil War Posters: Pennsylvania, Patricia D. Klingenstein Library Print Room Collections (Folder 5, item 255), New York Historical Society, New York, NY.

⁵² Olson, *Music and Musket*, 59.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ *The Civil War Diary of James T. Ayers* was the only recruiter’s diary I was able to access. The fact that he was a recruiter for African-American regiments may have played a role in the lack of interest in musicians.

enlisted into the infantry where they were needed, leaving open the opportunity for younger boys to fill the musical ranks.

General Order Number 15, issued May 4, 1861, directly affected the volunteer companies and regiments.⁵⁵ According to this order, companies were to be from 83 to 101 men, including two musicians, while regiments were comprised of ten companies in addition to a regimental staff consisting of twelve officers and men (including two principle musicians), as well as a band of 24.⁵⁶ In total, a regiment could accommodate 46 musicians.

Companies	Minimum.	Maximum.
	1 Captain.	1 Captain.
	1 First Lieutenant.	1 First Lieutenant.
	1 Second Lieutenant.	1 Second Lieutenant.
	1 First Sergeant.	1 First Sergeant.
	4 Sergeants.	4 Sergeants.
	8 Corporals.	8 Corporals.
	2 Musicians.	2 Musicians.
	1 Wagoner.	1 Wagoner.
	64 Privates.	82 Privates.
	83 Aggregate.	101 Aggregate.
Regiments	Minimum.	Maximum.
	830 company officers and enlisted men.	1,010 company officers and enlisted men.
	1 Colonel.	1 Colonel.
	1 Lieutenant Colonel.	1 Lieutenant Colonel.
	1 Major.	1 Major.
	1 Adjutant, (a Lieutenant.)	1 Adjutant, (a Lieutenant.)
	1 Regimental Q.M., (a Lieut.)	1 Regimental Q.M., (a Lieut.)
	1 Assistant Surgeon.	1 Assistant Surgeon.
	1 Sergeant Major.	1 Sergeant Major.
	1 Regimental Q.M. Sergeant.	1 Regimental Q.M. Sergeant.
	1 Regimental Commis'y Serg't.	1 Regimental Commis'y Serg't.
	1 Hospital Steward.	1 Hospital Steward.
	2 Principal Musicians.	2 Principal Musicians.
	24 Musicians For Band.	24 Musicians For Band.
	866 Aggregate.	1,046 Aggregate. ⁵⁷

⁵⁵ Olson, *Music and Musket*, 70.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 71.

⁵⁷ Lorenzo Thomas-Asst. Adjutant General, "General Orders (1861)," Digitizing sponsor, State of Indiana through the Indiana State Library, <https://archive.org/details/gener15unit>.

This table is also reprinted in Olson's *Music and Musket* on page 71, which led me to the order. However, I cite the order directly due to Olson's exclusion of the role "assistant surgeon" in the regiment list, as well as using the terminology verbatim. For example, Olson writes "Regimental Quartermaster" rather the "Regimental Q.M. (a Lieut.)."

This order exhibits the U.S. Government's consensus that there was a need for both field and band musicians. Kenneth E. Olsen shows us that, along with the buglers allotted to the cavalry, musicians account for approximately 2.5% of the total troop levy.⁵⁸ Furthermore, there were a total of 104,234 vacancies for musicians during the war.⁵⁹ Though these may not have all been filled, it reveals there was an importance placed on employing musicians.

Only a minority of recruitment posters listed musicians among those being sought. From a sample of 50 posters from New Jersey, Pennsylvania, New York, and Massachusetts in the New York Historical Society's extensive collection, only one called for musicians. An undated Marines Corps recruitment poster from is noteworthy because it includes the pay rates for musicians. Their \$12/mo on the pay scale is between privates (\$11/mo) and corporals (\$13/mo). The poster specifies that the Marine Corps is looking for, "able-bodied *unmarried* MEN, between the ages of 21-35 years not less than 5 feet 4 1/2 inches high, and of good character."⁶⁰ It does not state whether these age limits apply to musicians or only to soldiers, and this ambiguity is problematic when trying to determine whether they are calling for adults-only musicians or drummer boys. Marine Corps posters are more unusual than the Army recruitment posters, and the Marine Corps may have had a preference to older recruits. Likewise, the age limitations may not have applied to the musicians.

There are Army posters that also call for musicians similar to the Marine Corps poster. In a ca. 1861 notice, the 2nd Regiment Infantry California Volunteers lists musicians under their

⁵⁸ Olson, *Music and Musket*, 72.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ "U.S. Marine Corps. Recruitment Poster."

pay rate at \$17 per month (*Inset page 27*).⁶¹ It may seem that the California Army's salary was better than the Philadelphia Marine Corps, but it is noted that this was a combination of the U.S. Government and the State of California. The Philadelphia poster may have only been a base rate before government pay that may have been implied at the time, however, this is not noted. The age range specified on this poster is 18 to 35, and as in the previous example, it does not explicitly say whether this applies to musicians or not. What they do show is that there was some cases where a direct effort to recruit musicians was made. Posters were not the only way that the government recruited, newspaper announcements were also used.

The August 15, 1864 *Chicago Tribune* printed a proclamation in which Illinois Governor Richard Yates announced that, "the service of ten companies of volunteer infantry will be immediately accepted for the Government service, for the period of one, two, or three years as recruits may elect."⁶² This was in response to the President's quota announced on July 18, 1864 of 500,000 men. The significant aspect of this announcement is who the Governor asks for: "one Captain, one 1st Lieutenant, one 2d Lieutenant, one 1st Sergeant, four sergeants, eight corporals, two musicians, one wagoner, and not less than sixty-four or more than eighty two privates."⁶³ Specifying the musicians shows their importance and regiment's need for them. At least twenty musicians would be needed in order to fulfill the Governor's goal.

⁶¹ "Wanted 500 Able Bodies Men" Broadside ca. 1861, Records of the Adjutant General's Office, 1762-1984, (Record group 94), National Archives, Online Public Access, <http://research.archives.gov/description/4644610>.

⁶² "Proclamation by Gov. Yates.: A Full Regiment Wanted for State Service. ... Excellent Chance for Volunteers. Bounties," *Chicago Tribune*, Aug 15, 1864, <http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/docview/175369902/86A8ED00F87438FPQ/21?accountid=10226>.

⁶³ "Proclamation by Gov. Yates."

WANTED

500 ABLE BODIED MEN,



From 18 to 35 years of age, for Active Service, for the

2d REGIMENT INFANTRY

CALIFORNIA VOLUNTEERS.

The following is a list of the Pay and Bounties allowed to any man duly accepted viz:

First Sergeants.....	\$25 00 per month.	From the U.
Sergeants.....	22 00 " "	S. Government
Corporals and Privates.....	18 00 " "	and the State
Musicians.....	17 00 " "	of California.

In addition to which each man is entitled to \$3 50 per month for Clothing, good Subsistence and Medical Attendance, and

A Bounty of \$302!

Each man will receive, immediately after being mustered into service, one

Month's pay in advance	\$13 00
First Installment of Bounty	60 00
Premium	2 00
Total Cash in Hand.	\$75 00

And the balance of the Bounty is paid in installments, as follows:

At the First Regular Pay-Day, two months after being mustered into Service	\$40 00
At the First Regular Pay-Day, six months after being mustered into Service	40 00
At the end of the First Years Service	40 00
At the end of Eighteen Months Service	40 00
At the end of Two Years Service	40 00
At Expiration of the Three Years Service, or sooner if honorably discharged	40 00

Recruiting Office,

ALBERT HAHN,

2nd Lieut, 2nd Infantry, C. V., Recruiting Officer.

Occasionally, an advertisement for a direct call of drummer boys would be placed in a newspaper, especially if there was competition for their service. So many regiments sought musicians that demand would sometimes exceed supply.⁶⁴ Kenneth E. Olsen shows two examples of this from the *New York Times*. The first ad on May 5, 1861 announces, “The National Zouaves are well organized, but a Drum Major and Buglers are wanted for this Regiment.”⁶⁵ Three days later, another ad was placed: “ADVANCED GUARD ZOUAVES, Col. Duryea Commanding, six drummer-boys wanted. Apply at No. 564 Broadway Avenue.”⁶⁶

Many regiments had contracts with professional bands.⁶⁷ Some would play for only one regiment, whereas others would play for several as a work made for hire. However, a band could only enter service with one unit, and this would be publicized. The *New York Times* printed one of these announcements on September 1, 1861:

“The City Coronet Band beg to have us announce to their friends and public generally that they have joined the Maryland Guard Battalion and hence-forth will assume the name of the Maryland Guard Band. They solicit a continuance of the patronage heretofore so liberally bestowed upon them. *Signed, D. Feldman, Captain.*”⁶⁸

This examples shows that efforts were made by the military to have musicians in place when regiments mustered. Some locations lucky enough to have a multitude of good musicians, such as New York City, would choose the best to be the pride of their regiment.

⁶⁴ Olson, *Music and Musket*, 64.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 62.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

In 1862, the American Journal of Education printed an article called, “Physical and Military exercises in Public Schools, A National Necessity.”⁶⁹ Though the article is not specifically about musicians, it is noteworthy because of its issue with public school children. In the eighteen-page essay, Edward Molineux expressed the reasons that kids should be drilled and prepared. He claims that the Confederate Army could have quickly been defeated if the Union had had a well trained, experienced, and carefully drilled militia rather than having “been obliged to create ourselves a military people by the sufferings and bitterness of an experience bought on the field of active warfare.”⁷⁰ According to Molineux, the solution to this is to train children. After noting the frailty of many youngsters within the schools, he asserts that our intellectual advancements have come at the cost of energy and body. He questionably states that “...too close application to study is detrimental to the growth of the body.”⁷¹ After re-elevating education, he expresses that both physical and mental discipline should be part of the curriculum by arguing that it is a necessity in order to protect the education obtained, which itself would be of little avail if challenged by a waring nation. Citing the great ancient empires of Greece and Rome, he emphasizes that he does not aim to re-establish the laws of Spartan Lycurgus, but to teach that it is a privilege and honor to protect one’s homeland.

Obviously being well educated himself, Molineux presents a well organized argument with realistic solutions to the various Boards of Education, comparing the practicality of it to England and German education systems of the time, which apparently did institute this

⁶⁹ Edward L. Molineux, “X. Physical and Military Exercises in Public Schools.: A National Necessity,” *The American Journal of Education*, (June 1862) Issue 27. Publisher F.C. Brownell. Hartford, CT. <http://ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/docview/124993464?accountid=10226>.

⁷⁰ Molineux, “Physical and Military Exercises.”

⁷¹ Ibid.

training.⁷² The sentiment was shared by others, as seen by a reply to Molineux from Bangor, Maine Mayor Isaiah Steston, stating he has proposed the idea to the Bangor City Council.⁷³

Though not directly introducing the idea of drumming to school children, a strong patriotism and call for duty may have led some to join as musicians until they were old enough to become a soldier.

⁷² Molineux, "Physical and Military Exercises."

⁷³ Ibid.

Chapter IV - Career and The Path to Soldiering

“Wishing he were a few years older, or a few inches taller, he stood there and watched the men surge the Court House steps in their eagerness to enlist.”⁷⁴

Most of the memoirs written by drummers explain that age played a factor in their choice to enter the Army as a musician. Louis Newcome states that, “although I was too young to enlist, it was easy for me to “join” a regiment en route to the front.”⁷⁵ Olive Deane Hormel, who compiled Corydon Foote’s story concurs that, “he knew what he wanted to do-join the Michigan First Infantry and go off to fight the Rebels.”⁷⁶ The yearning no doubt guided some of the boys into drumming, who would have otherwise enlisted as privates if they had been of age. Hormel goes on to say that Foote knew that “there might be a chance of a place that someone as small as he could fill . . .” and he was “determined to keep a sharp watch.”⁷⁷ The only way to fight the war while underage was as a musician. While some of these children would later become soldiers, others would continue the musical path, and a few would end up in the most unexpected places. Louis Newcome’s autobiography of his war experiences shows a chance encounter led him to occupy one of the most astonishing positions in the war, Abraham Lincoln’s personal spy.

Louis Newcome was only fourteen when Colonel Webb coaxed his parents into letting him join.⁷⁸ He soon found himself in the midst of the war, drilling and keeping watch on Confederate prisoners. Early one morning he heard shots being fired, a crowd of Rebels were

⁷⁴Foote, *With Sherman to Sea*, 20.

⁷⁵Newcome, *Lincoln’s Boy Spy*, 4.

⁷⁶Foote, *With Sherman to Sea*, 20.

⁷⁷Ibid.

⁷⁸Newcome, *Lincoln’s Boy Spy*, 4. Also, see Chapter One footnote 29.

chasing a man on horseback through the woods. As a New York Regiment formed a line and returned fire, the fugitive on horseback came in the gates as Newcome helped him dismount, he discovered that the man was covered in blood. The anonymous man reached inside his coat and pulled out a brown envelope, sealed tightly with red tape and covered in blood, handed it to Newcome and said “To President Lincoln . . . Immediately! . . . Take it yourself! . . . Go! . . . Quick! . . .”⁷⁹ Newcome took these as direct orders and headed for the train depot.

Indeed Newcome had quite a journey getting to Washington, only by the luck of befriending a protective and Union loyalist train conductor did he make it unscathed and uncaught. Once he reached the White House he was immediately let in; apparently in 1861, when a blood stained fourteen year old in uniform asserts he has been sent to see the President, it is taken seriously. When Lincoln finally entered the a crowded White House room, full of staff anxious to know the boy’s business, Newcome asked, “Are you the President of the United States?” Lincoln replied, “Yes, young man . . . unfortunately I am.”⁸⁰ He handed Abraham Lincoln the envelope and started to leave, Lincoln stopped the teenager and told him to stay; Newcome had just delivered correspondence from the Western Army.

President Lincoln took a liking to Newcome, giving him the nickname “Brick-top” because of his red hair. He lived in the White House for a few months Lincoln proposed the idea to Newcome of relaying more messages. The boy knew how to ride a horse, had proven his ability to travel unseen, and had befriended Lincoln as well as Allan Pinkerton, the spy. Newcome would later be sent into the Confederacy, posing as a Southern boy, in order to gain

⁷⁹ Newcome, *Lincoln’s Boy Spy*, 6.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 13.

intelligence on the *Magnolia*, a cotton ship that would be captured by the Union.⁸¹ Captain Newcome's story is unique, however, other boys also held and continued military careers from their dedicated beginnings.

Brooklyn's Green-Wood Cemetery provides great information on drummer boys. Extensive work has been done by cemetery historian Jeff Richman, as well as others, in order to preserve the more than fifty such persons interred there. The research shows that many of these boys had enduring careers even after the war. For example, Lewis O. Schnackenberg enlisted in the 192nd Pennsylvania Volunteers at the age of fourteen, later re-enlisting as a private in the 192nd. After the war, he worked in the produce commission business, but was still active as a commander of Devon-Cushing Post of the Grand Army of the Republic (G.A.R.).⁸² Others such as Samuel H. Bailey enlisted at the age of 15, and according to Green-Wood archives he entered service as a drummer boy and soon shouldered a musket.⁸³

Prominent figures that began as drummers are found at Green-Wood, as well. John H. Johnson was the captain and commanding officer of the Eighth precinct police in Brooklyn. An article in the Brooklyn Eagle states that "Captain Johnson is probably one of the best known policemen in this city. He was the first commanding officer of the mounted squad and for years he was in charge of the mounted police. He was a fearless rider, and during his service on

⁸¹ Newcome, *Lincoln's Boy Spy*, 197.

⁸² Jeff Richman, e-mail message and attachment, November 19, 2013.

This is also corroborated in his *New York Times* obituary which can be found through ProQuest Historical Newspapers: <http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/docview/101433910/59FA63CD4D0C4D28PQ/1?accountid=10226>.

⁸³ Ibid.

horseback made a number of notable rescues in caceses (*sic*) of runaway.”⁸⁴ Johnson, who was born in 1844, served as a drummer in the early years of the War before enlisting as a private on December 21, 1863.⁸⁵ He went on to serve as chief of scouts under General Philip Sheridan, saw a multitude of battles, refused to be relieved of duty after being wounded in the left breast at the Battle of Winchester, and was present during Lee’s surrender at Appomattox.⁸⁶

Movement from drummer to private was not ideal. Conversely, some privates were ‘promoted’ to musicians, with a more favorable pay scale. The Green-Wood archives show both situations of promotion and reduction of ranks. Jules Couillon (or Julius Couillou) was a Swiss born watch maker who enlisted as a musician when he was 21 years old.⁸⁷ Though he was not a ‘boy’ drummer, his situation is noteworthy because after intra-regimental transfers, he was reduced to the rank of private after two years of service.⁸⁸ It is unknown if this was for disciplinary reasons or if his new unit, the 40th New York, did not have room for another musician. John Crow’s story was different. He was thirteen, claiming to be sixteen, when he

⁸⁴ “Captain Johnson Very Ill: A Well Known Police Officer Suffering From Typhoid Fever.” *Brooklyn Eagle*. March 20, 1897. http://eagle.brooklynpubliclibrary.org/Default/Scripting/ArticleWin.asp?From=Search&Key=BEG/1897/03/20/1/Ar00112.xml&CollName=BEG_APA3_1895-1899&DOCID=427668&PageLabelPrint=&skin=%42%45%61%67%6c%65&GZ=%54&AppName=%32&sPublication=%42%45%47&sQuery=%6a%6f%68%6e%20%68%2e%20%6a%6f%68%6e%73%6f%6e&sSorting=%25%35%33%25%36%33%25%36%66%25%37%32%25%36%35%25%32%63%25%36%34%25%36%35%25%37%33%25%36%33&sDateFrom=%25%33%30%25%33%31%25%32%66%25%33%30%25%33%31%25%32%66%25%33%33%25%33%31%25%32%66%25%33%31%25%33%39%25%33%30%25%33%32&ViewMode=GIF&GZ=T.

⁸⁵ Jeff Richman, e-mail message and attachment, November 19, 2013.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

enlisted in the 74th New York Infantry.⁸⁹ He signed up six months after his older brother Nimrod joined as a private. John would eventually transferred to the 40th New York as a drummer.⁹⁰ His story is significant because he was promoted to the rank of musician before mustering out, implying that upon entering he was receiving the lower pay of a private.⁹¹ Musicians were in placed above privates and below corporals on the pay scale.

Though drumming was sometimes a boyhood adventure, to some it was simply in their blood and would last their entire lives. Olive Dean Hormel noted that Corydon Foote, "...often had his regimental drum beside him . . . He loved to play it and would make a terrible din on it at the slightest provocation, adding to his story by beating our marches and calls . . ."⁹² She goes on to say that after their meetings, "Cord would pick up his drum and drum me out of the house and down the walk."⁹³ Others continued their musical legacies in the public eye. Henry Eason (or Easen) joined the 31st New York at the age of 15.⁹⁴ Injured during the Battle of the First Bull Run, he later re-enlisted as a private and became the drum major at the Rankin Post G.A.R. After the war he formed the Eason Drum, Fife and Bugle Corps., a group of fifty who played both public and military events.⁹⁵ Whether they continued in the Army or left to begin civilian lives after the war, the pride and glory that came with being a drummer boy endured.

⁸⁹ The information obtained does not specify if he first enlisted as a soldier and later became a drummer, or if he enlisted as a drummer. The fact that he lied his age insinuates that he was enlisting as a soldier, however, he may have just been afraid of being rejected due to his age. The eighteen year old requirement was not strictly enforced, and there are many instances where boys under eighteen were taken as privates.

⁹⁰ Jeff Richman, e-mail message and attachment, November 19, 2013.

⁹¹ As noted in Chapter 3, musicians were above private and below corporal on the pay scale.

⁹² Foote, *With Sherman to Sea*, 9.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Jeff Richman, e-mail message and attachment, November 19, 2013.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

Conclusion

In modern times, teens and pre-teens seemingly have no place in war, yet only 150 years ago they did. Some 300 boys under the age of thirteen, at least 25 under ten, joined the Union Army as musicians.⁹⁶ They were on the parade routes, keeping the step, signaling the troops, and performing their duties on the battlefield. The stories of drummer boys intrigue modern day society as a nostalgia of a time long past. They were mascots to regiments, respected and treated as sons and equals. They were as lionhearted as the eldest in the unit and yet they kept the morale of the men high. But they were still children, and though they were in non-combatant roles, they were there in the midst of battle.

This study set out to find why a boy would go to war and why their parents allowed it. A variety of influences forced children to join the Army. Whether envious of older men or due to family obligations, pride from taking part in the marches and battles made the boys a respected member of the regiment. In conjunction with literature that glamorized the drummer boys, it became a very desirable position. Even depictions of death did not dissuade youngsters, they created a subconscious idolization of the position because they were often portrayed in heroic ways. With the opportunities of heroism, glamor, and adventures, many boys volunteered. The U.S. Army did not recruit drummers, per se, but the placement of drummers above privates in the pay scale shows their importance. All of these, in some way or another, impacted the decision to enlist.

⁹⁶Francis A. Lord and Arthur Wise, *Bands and Drummer Boys of the Civil War*, (New York: DaCapo Press, 1979), Page 100.

The practice of using drummer boys would end after the Civil War. For one, no more wars have been fought on American soil. Enlisting is less likely when physically disconnected from war. By WWI, tactics had drastically changed with use of motorized vehicles, fixed-wing aircraft, and radio communications, making the reliance of drum signals obsolete on the battlefield. The arena of war had changed from ramparts, fences, and cannons to trench warfare using heavy artillery. As the drummer boys' job concluded, the military reverted back to before Bennett Cuthbertson's 1768 recommendation that youngsters would be ideal for the role; military musicians once again were adult males.

Magazines such as the *Youth's Companion* began to put boys in new roles. Though the war resulted in violence being acceptable in adolescent literature, many stories were set in the classroom. The fictional tales used the school as a setting away from family where a child could surrender to their instincts. The lessons correlated their behavior with physical harm and endangering their moral well-being.⁹⁷ The change in attitude from duty to the country to obligation to self and family changed the opinions of children and how they should act.

The concept of a family unit would also begin to change. By the 1920s, families were having less children, more women were joining the workforce, and the automobile allowed families to move from urban apartments to their own land in the suburbs.⁹⁸ Simultaneously, the idea of "companionate marriage" was becoming the standard.⁹⁹ Refashioning the family in this way created a tighter bond with both mother and father having a voice of how a child is raised. This was paired with mothers being taught not to raise children from instincts, but rather how

⁹⁷ Paul B Ringle, "Thrills for Children," 88.

⁹⁸ Nancy F. Cott. *The Grounding of Modern Feminism*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987), 146.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 156.

medical doctors, psychologist, sociologist and others instructed the correct way to childrearing.¹⁰⁰ Allowing boys to go to war were not in these teachings.

The legend of the drummer boy is still alive today. Troops still march to drums to keep in step. For civilians, the drummer and fife tradition can be seen at Civil War re-enactments, as well as parades and other patriotic celebrations. There are some companies, such as The Company of Fifers and Drummers in Connecticut, that perform regularly and welcome new musicians. Civil War exhibitions at museums often express the importance of music during the war. In 2013, The Metropolitan Museum of Art presented “The Civil War and American Art.” One of the focal points of the exhibition was a large beautifully decorated drum. In fact, drummer boys are often seen in the artwork depicting the war. This uncovers that even in contemporary times, when it may seem absurd that an American child would be allowed on a battlefield, it is still glamorized to some extent. The intention is not to justify that youngsters were allowed to go to war 150 years ago, but to honor them for the brave duty they served at such a tender and unsuitable age to make a decision to willingly join the Army in wartime.



Soldiers' Lot at Green-Wood Cemetery. The drummer boy statue in the back overlooks the 127 veterans interred here.

¹⁰⁰ Cott. *The Grounding of Modern Feminism*, 168.

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Fig. 1, cover. “Drummer Boy Statue.” *N.d.* Zinc. Green-Wood Cemetery, Brooklyn, NY. Found at: <http://www.green-wood.com/2009/zinc-you-think/>.

Fig. 2, page 3. Ernest Vogt (attributed to). “Side Drum.” c. 1860. Wood, various materials. The Metropolitan Museum of Art. <http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/works-of-art/89.4.2162>.

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Fig. 5, page 19. See “The Dead Drummer Boy.” *Harper’s* (below).

Fig. 6, page 20. See “The Drummer-Boy’s Burial.” *Harper’s* (below).

Fig. 7, page 27. See “Wanted 500 Able Bodies Men.” Broadside (above).

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